

West Point, July 3, 1848

My dear friend

I am indebted to you for your letter and your advice concerning the Algae, but if you wish to lay me under eternal obligations you can do so, by taking the whole job off my hands.

I never wished to undertake it, and positively refused it when first offered to me, and I only regret that I ever gave a reluctant consent to take the task provided I could get assistance from abroad.

Harvey's offer "to share authorship, labor and proceeds" with me appeared perfectly fair, and his request to be allowed to study the whole collection was perfectly reasonable. I did not anticipate so much objection being made to sending the collection abroad. If you and Dr Torrey cannot suggest some way of getting the Algae into Harvey's hands, and thus give him the means of making the Report, I shall as soon as possible return the Algae to Washington and gladly get my neck out of the yoke. The more I look at the job, the more I see how utterly absurd it is for any one in this country to undertake it - Indeed I do not believe that any one but Harvey can do it, and I confess I do not sympathize with the national feeling which would prevent his having the full credit of the scientific determination of the specimens - If you are going abroad, could you not take the Algae off my hands entirely, and while abroad get Harvey's <sup>aid</sup> to work them up into a report which ~~you~~ you could publish when you return as your joint labour? If you can fix it in any way so that I can get out of the scrape I shall be most thankful - Do let me

know, what course you think best, and particularly whether you will be willing to take the job off my hands.

I expect to start for Washington soon, to be gone for a few weeks but you can direct your letters as usual, if I should happen not to return before you come from the West, you will find Mrs Bailey at home, and she will be most happy to give you ~~and~~ and your lady a most hearty welcome. I trust however that I shall be back myself before you get <sup>back</sup>, for I am very desirous of seeing both you and your letter half.

I am enjoying a laugh at the Londoners, I sent over specimens of the Navicula Spencerii (which I could readily resolve by means of either Spencers objective or by Dr Beckes objectives made by Powell,) and <sup>a number of</sup> the members of the London Mic. Soc. have been trying for a month with their best instruments to resolve this object, and they own that "they can make nothing of it." They of course think that Spencers lenses must be something wonderful, or else that I have been quizzing them. The fact is that their lenses like yours and Coles will <sup>as I fully believe</sup> show these lines easily, but the management of the light required is so novel to those who have been accustomed to central light and achromatic condensers that I do not wonder at the failures. Becke owns that he would never have succeeded, if he had not seen me manipulate, yet he can now see the lines even by his  $\frac{1}{8}$ th objective.

I have just sent to London the most explicit directions I could give as to the management of this object, and I hope soon to hear that they have succeeded in the determination of the lines in question.

I think it probable that I may stop a day or two at Princeton on my way to Washington. I shall consult Dr J. about the Myce, but I shall rely mainly on you, and I do hope that you will show me some way of escape.

Yours with unceasing regards  
J. W. Bailey

Prof. Asa Gray  
Harvard University  
Cambridge  
Mass.

